FIRST COMICS
WARP SPECIAL
JUNE $1.00
NO. 3
$1.25 CANADA
CHAOS
PRINCE OF Madness!
Love and DEATH!
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Especially Warped Words

%FIRST COMICS,
1014 DAVIS STREET, EVANSTON, ILLINOIS 60201

FORWARD

For those of you who read letter columns *before* anything else, you might find the following information useful:

This particular **Warp Special** is actually a sequel to **Warp Special** #1. **Peter Gillis** and **George Freeman** had so much fun working together on the first one, that they decided to do a return engagement (**Howard Chaykin,** who pencilled the first Special, is devoting most of his energy to his brilliant **American Flagg!**; so George gladly took on the pencilling as well as the inking this time).

Although almost a year has passed since **Warp Special** #1 was released, no time has elapsed in Fen-Ra during the interim. So, here's a very brief synopsis of the action so far: Chaos tried to plunder Fen-ra but was thwarted by a previous incarnation of Cumulus. Cumulus sacrificed himself to save Fen-Ra, and Chaos is about to get what's coming to him. Now, read on ...

WARP GOES HOLLYWOOD

You saw Warp, the play; you read Warp, the comic book; now see Warp, the movie! First Comics recently signed a movie contract with Mark Victor and Michael Grais, the highly successful Hollywood writing/producing team whose credits include *Poltergeist*, the 1982 box office smash.

Victor and Grais's many other credits during their seven year partnership include the 20th Century Fox film *Death Hunt*, starring Charles Bronson and Lee Marvin, and numerous episodes of such television shows as Baretta, Kojak, and Starsky & Hutch.

The team presently has two major movie releases in production: Street Smart, a musical with the Alan Ladd Company for release through Warner Brothers, and a thriller, Turn Left or Die.

Victor and Grais have a wealth of Warp source material to work with; they have the ability to adapt all the aspects of the Warp Universe — those introduced in the original plays and those introduced in First Comics. And if any of these latter creations are used in the motion picture, those creators will receive additional compensation. Comics talent who have added significantly to the Warp story include **Frank Brunner, Peter Gillis, Jerry Bingham, Howard Chaykin,** and **George Freeman.**

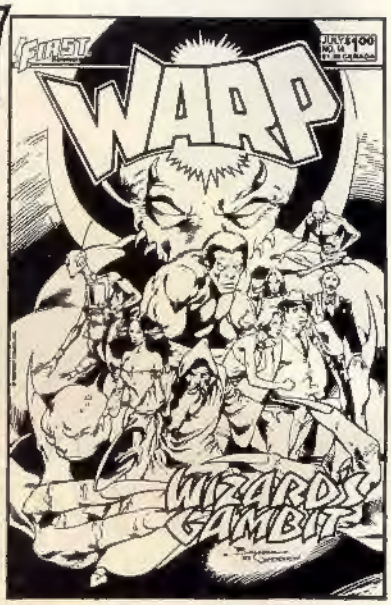
NEXT MONTH: Our story continues where it left off at the end of **Warp** #13. Fen-ra is under attack from an enemy that has waited for eons for just this opportunity — for the first time in 35,000 years, the eternal city is without a protector! Lugulbanda only has one choice: he must seek the help of his fellow wizards. What happens when the combined might of eleven adepts of the arcane arts is pitted against the power of

the uncountably old, unspeakably evil Demons of Dis?

Find out in "Wizard's Gambit," written by **Peter Gillis,** pencilled by **Jerry Bingham,** and inked by **Mike Gustovich.**

Meanwhile, in the back eight pages of **Warp,** the adventure of Outrider continues as we welcome back penciller **Bill Willingham,** the original Outrider artist and one of the hottest new artists of the year!

Outrider and Archangel have escaped fiery death in the middle of a sun, only to



find themselves in the middle of an intergalactic war! But who are the good guys? Can Outrider complete his quest before he's blasted into his constituent atoms? I don't even know, and I'm the editor!

Willingham and inker **Hilary Barta** join writer **Peter Gillis** in "War With the Iron Star!"

Don't miss **Warp** #14! On sale same time, next month.

— Rick Oliver

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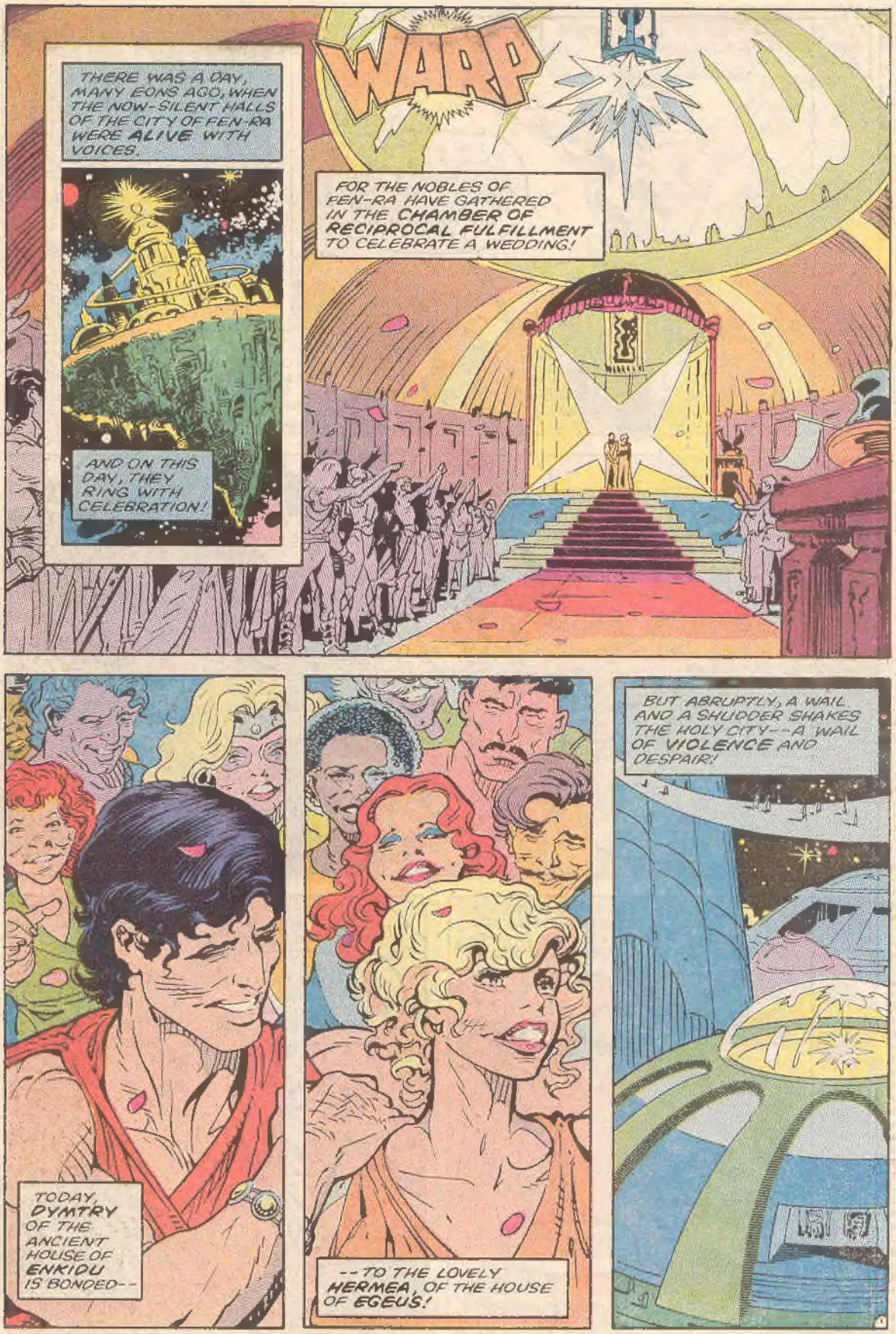

WARP
THERE WAS A DAY, MANY EONS AGO, WHEN THE NOW-SILENT HALLS OF THE CITY OF FEN-RA WERE ALIVE WITH VOICES.
AND ON THIS DAY, THEY RING WITH CELEBRATION!
FOR THE NOBLES OF FEN-RA HAVE GATHERED IN THE CHAMBER OF RECIPROCAL FULFILLMENT TO CELEBRATE A WEDDING!
TODAY, DYMTRY OF THE ANCIENT HOUSE OF ENKIDU IS BONDED--
--TO THE LOVELY HERMEA, OF THE HOUSE OF EGEUS!
BUT ABRUPTLY, A WAIL AND A SHUDDER SHAKES THE HOLY CITY--A WAIL OF VIOLENCE AND DESPAIR!

IT IS THE WARRIOR LYSANDER WHO GATHERS THE NOBLES ABOUT HIM.
THE ALARM CAME FROM THE CHAMBER OF THE COSMIC CRYSTAL! WE MUST DEFEND THE HEART OF OUR CITY!
THE WIZARD LUGULBANDA SHALL NOT FIND HIS VASSALS UNREADY!
NOT UNREADY, TRUE, BUT--
--A TRIFLE LATE!
FACELESS ONES! BEFORE THEIR POWERS RETURN--CAST THEM INTO THE ABYSS BEYOND FEN-RA!
IT'S NOT THAT EASY, YOU OLD GEEZER! I'LL DESTROY YOU, JUST AS I DESTROYED LORD CUMULUS! DO YOU HEAR ME?
O KNOWLEDGE INCARNATE--IS IT TRUE THAT THIS MONSTER KILLED LORD CUMULUS AND DAMAGED THE CRYSTAL ITSELF*
ALL QUITE TRUE, ALAS.
* FOR MORE DETAILS, SEE WARP SPECIAL #1 -- MIKE & RICK.
THEN LYSANDER SHALL PERSONALLY HURL HIM INTO THE ABYSS!
WAIT!
2

WAIT? WHO DARES PLEAD FOR THIS SCUM'S LIFE?
NO ONE, HOTHEAD! BUT LUGULBANDA SAYS HE USED MANY DEVICES! WE MUST STRIP HIM OF THESE, LEST HE SURVIVE AND RETURN!
VERY WELL, SARGON.
SHORTLY THEREAFTER--
WELL, THAT SEEMS TO BE ALL.
AND SO, BLAZING WITH ANGER, THE NOBLES OF THE HOLY CITY LEAD PRINCE CHAOS AND HIS ALLIES OUT TO THE EDGE OF THE ABYSS, TO CAST THEM INTO THE VOID FOREVER!
ONE BY ONE THEY ARE THROWN--
--CHAOS, FALLING WITH THE DIGNITY OF RAGE--
THE SORCERESS VALARIA, WITH AN INNATE GRACE--
--SYMAX WITH LITTLE OF EITHER--
--AND THE MINO-SPIDER ISENGRIM, WITH A PERVERSE PRIDE--!
I CAN FIND MY WAY BY MYSELF THANK YOU!
NO! NO! PLEEEEEEZE--
BUT THE ABYSS IS A STRANGER PLACE THAN EVEN THE FEN-RANIANS IMAGINE! THE SAGA OF THE PRINCE OF MADNESS HAD NOT ENDED--ONLY TAKEN A DARK AND SINISTER TURN.
3

"Four Figures on a Darkened Stage..."
THROUGH WARPS OF SPACE AND TIME UNNUMBERED THEY FALL -- AND WHETHER BY SOME FORCE OF WILL OR OTHER POWER, THREE OF THE FOUR REMAIN TOGETHER -- AND SOMEHOW SURVIVE--!
PART 1:
EXILE AND DISCOVERY
PETER B. GILLIS STORY
GEORGE FREEMAN ART / COLORS
JANICE CHIANG LETTERS
MIKE GOLD EDITOR

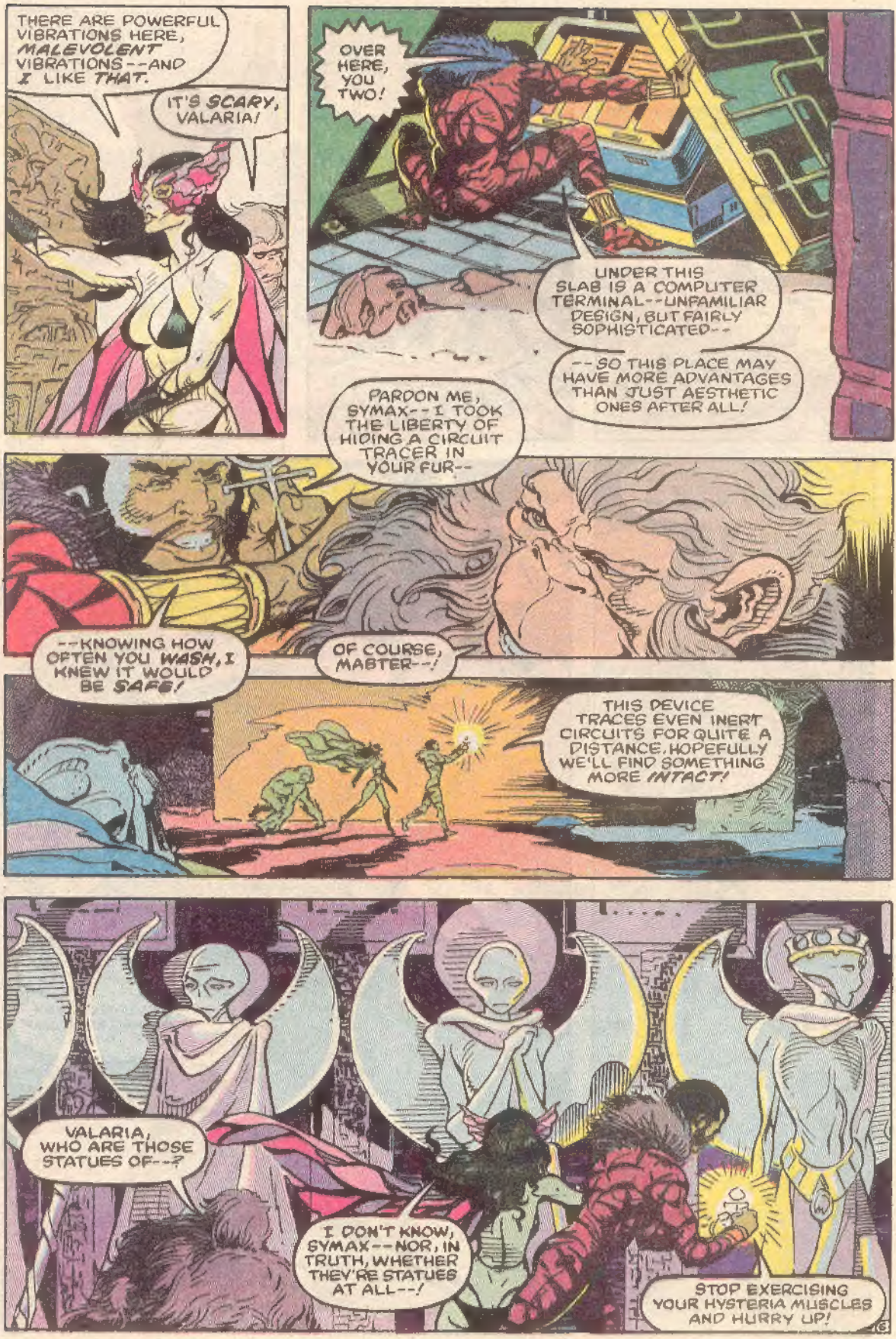
AND EVENTUALLY THERE COMES A TIME WHEN A BARRIER OPENS--TO REVEAL SOLID GROUND BENEATH THEM--

AND THERE THEY FINALLY COME TO REST.
THUMP!

HEAR ME, WIZARD--OR DON'T, IT'S ALL THE SAME--
PRINCE CHAOS SHALL HAVE HIS VENGEANCE, AND ON THIS ROCK HE SHALL BUILD IT!

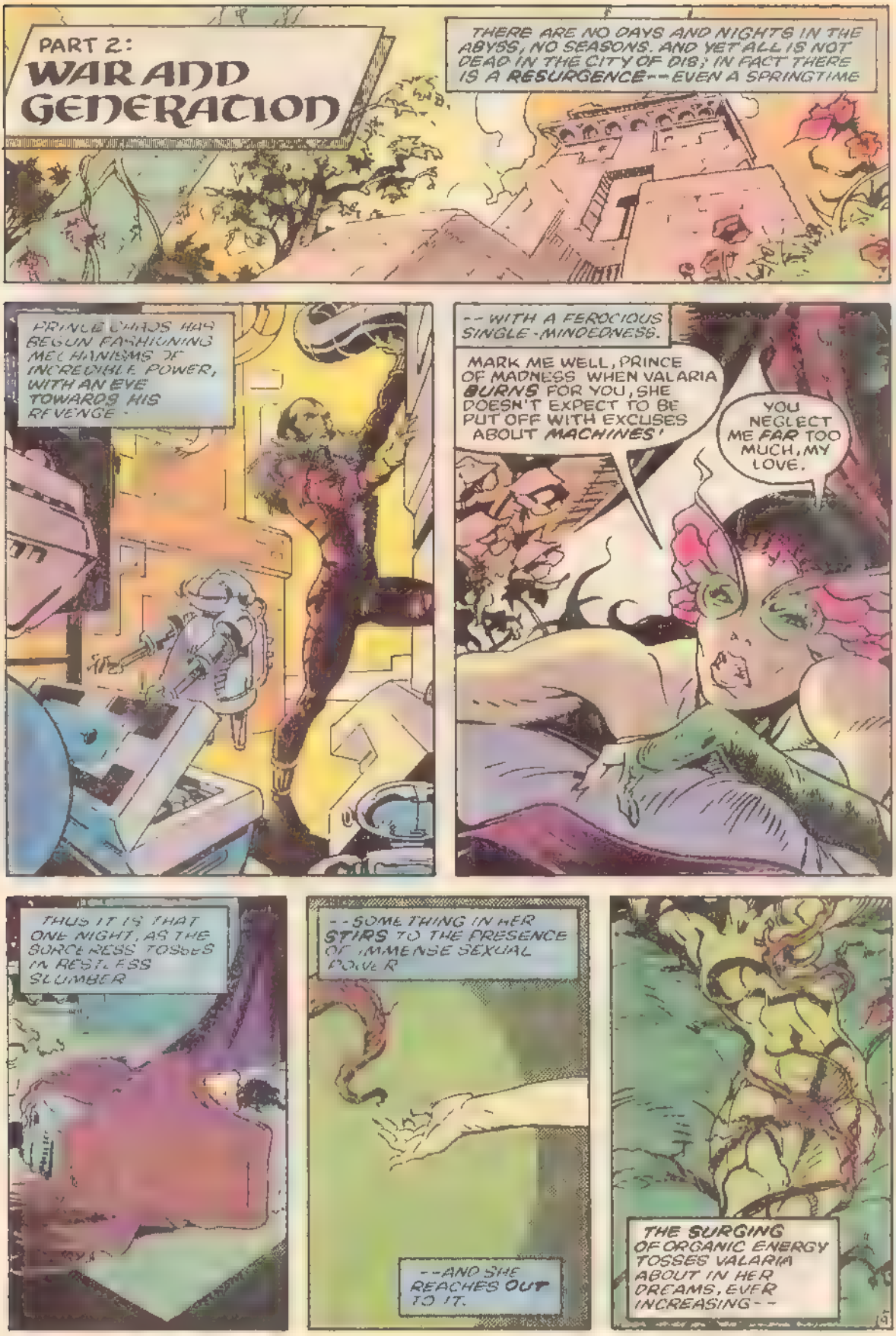
EXCUSE ME, MY PRINCE, BUT THIS SCARCELY LOOKS LIKE A ROCK--!
YES, MASTER, IT LOOKS LIKE A CITY--!
THAT WAS FOR RHETORICAL EFFECT, IDIOTS--

--BUT YOU MAY HAVE A POINT.
A PILE OF RUINS--BUT A MAGNIFICENT PILE! I LIKE IT.
5

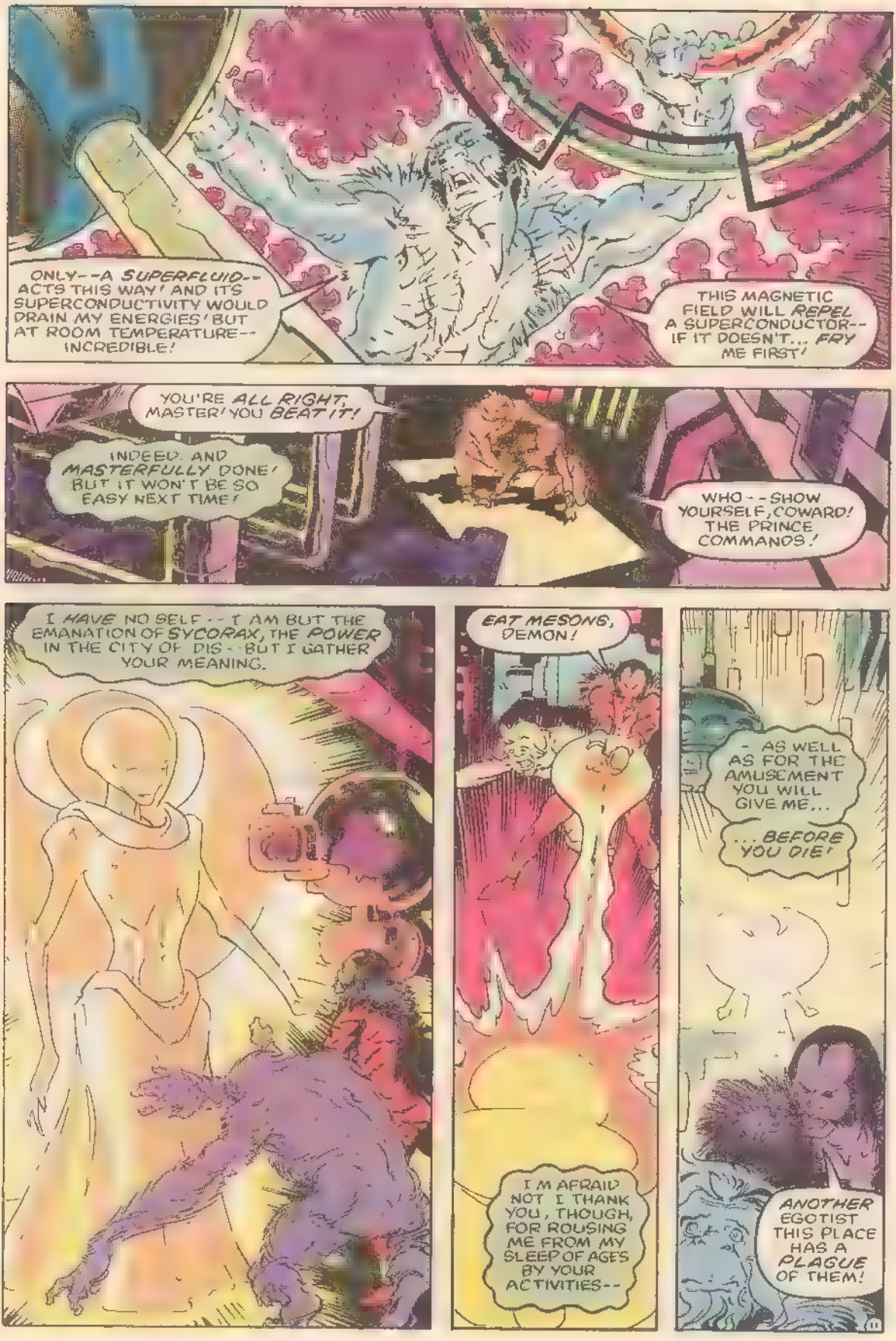

THERE ARE POWERFUL VIBRATIONS HERE, MALEVOLENT VIBRATIONS--AND I LIKE THAT.
IT'S SCARY, VALARIA!
OVER HERE, YOU TWO!
UNDER THIS SLAB IS A COMPUTER TERMINAL--UNFAMILIAR DESIGN, BUT FAIRLY SOPHISTICATED--
--SO THIS PLACE MAY HAVE MORE ADVANTAGES THAN JUST AESTHETIC ONES AFTER ALL!
PARDON ME, SYMAX--I TOOK THE LIBERTY OF HIDING A CIRCUIT TRACER IN YOUR FUR--
--KNOWING HOW OFTEN YOU WASH, I KNEW IT WOULD BE SAFE!
OF COURSE, MABTER--!
THIS DEVICE TRACES EVEN INERT CIRCUITS FOR QUITE A DISTANCE. HOPEFULLY WE'LL FIND SOMETHING MORE INTACT!
VALARIA, WHO ARE THOSE STATUES OF--?
I DON'T KNOW, SYMAX--NOR, IN TRUTH, WHETHER THEY'RE STATUES AT ALL--!
STOP EXERCISING YOUR HYSTERIA MUSCLES AND HURRY UP!

HERE, I EXPECT, ALL OUR SPECULATIONS, SHUDDERING AND OTHERWISE, SHALL BE ANSWERED.
BUT, MASTER-- THE VIEWER'S SO OLD--!
JUST AS I THOUGHT-- ALL IN WORKING ORDER, JUST NO POWER.
BUT WHERE CAN WE FIND A POWER SOURCE?
QUITE SIMPLE! SYMAX--!
A FEW HOURS LATER...
THERE! NOT FULLY RESTORED, BUT I'VE TAPPED THE DATA BANKS--
WE SEEM TO BE GETTING SOMETHING NOW--
IF YOU READ THIS MESSAGE, UNKNOWN ONES, MY FIRST WORD IS TO FLEE THIS PLACE AT ONCE. THE DANGER YOU ARE IN IS BEYOND COMPREHENSION. IF SUCH AS WE CANNOT STAND AGAINST THIS DANGER, YOU MUST SURELY DIE!
WE OF THE CITY OF DIS ARE A MIGHTY RACE, HAVING LONG FOUGHT THE FORCES OF THE GRAND DESIGN ITSELF TO A STANDSTILL.
7

"WE HAD EVEN GONE AS FAR AS TO OVER-RUN ONE OF ITS LESSER OUTPOSTS, A PLACE KNOWN AS FEN-RA."
"BUT IN TRYING TO FORGE A WEAPON THAT WOULD SMASH THE GRAND DESIGN, WE--OVERREACHED OURSELVES."
"ONE BY ONE, THEN BY THE SCORE, OUR CREATION HAS SLAUGHTERED US. THERE IS NO DEFENSE."
A REMAINING FEW HAVE FLED. OF THOSE THAT REMAIN, I MAY BE THE LAST. I DO NOT KNOW. BUT YOU MUST LEAVE THIS PLACE, AND NEVER LOOK BACK!
DID YOU HEAR? IT SPOKE OF OVER-RUNNING FEN-RA AS IF THAT WERE NOTHING!
OH, YOU HEARD THEM: EGOTISTS. PRINCE CHAOS IS A MATCH FOR ANYTHING THEY CAN DISH OUT.
STILL, THEIR COMPUTER SYSTEM IS NICE; I CAN USE THE PARTS...
BUT--WHAT IF THAT THING IS STILL HERE?
End of Part 1.


PART 2:
WAR AND GENERATION
THERE ARE NO DAYS AND NIGHTS IN THE ABYSS, NO SEASONS, AND YET ALL IS NOT DEAD IN THE CITY OF DIS; IN FACT THERE IS A RESURGENCE--EVEN A SPRINGTIME
PRINCE CHAOS HAS BEGUN FASHIONING MECHANISMS OF INCREDIBLE POWER, WITH AN EYE TOWARDS HIS REVENGE.
--WITH A FEROCIOUS SINGLE-MINDEDNESS.
MARK ME WELL, PRINCE OF MADNESS WHEN VALARIA BURNS FOR YOU, SHE DOESN'T EXPECT TO BE PUT OFF WITH EXCUSES ABOUT MACHINES!
YOU NEGLECT ME FAR TOO MUCH, MY LOVE.
THUS IT IS THAT ONE NIGHT, AS THE SORCERESS TOSSES IN RESTLESS SLUMBER
--SOMETHING IN HER STIRS TO THE PRESENCE OF IMMENSE SEXUAL POWER
--AND SHE REACHES OUT TO IT.
THE SURGING OF ORGANIC ENERGY TOSSES VALARIA ABOUT IN HER DREAMS, EVER INCREASING--

UNTIL SHE CANNOT BEAR IT.
AAAA!!EEEE!
I'VE NEVER HEARD THE MISTRESS SCREAM LIKE THAT!
THAT FRUIT BY HER--! SHE CAN'T HAVE BEEN SO FOOLISH AS TO POISON HERSELF!
DID YOU PICK THIS FOR HER, APE?
N-NO! I'VE NEVER SEEN THAT KIND BEFORE!
BE CAREFUL, MASTER! SHE'S JUST BARELY ALIVE!
DON'T WORRY I'M SHIELDED AGAINST ALL KNOWN TOXINS AND CORROSIVES!
IT CAN T--
INCREDIBLE
IT'S CRAWLING UP MY ARM AS IF IT WERE ALIVE!
AND WHERE IT SPREADS, MY DEVICES ARE ALL NEUTRALIZED!
IF I DON'T WORK FAST, I'LL BE COMPLETELY COVERED!
THERE HAS TO BE A SOLUTION TO THIS! I HAVE TO THINK--!
THE STUFF CAN'T BE ALIVE I'D BE PROTECTED! BUT - THERE MIGHT BE AN ANSWER!


ONLY--A SUPERFLUID-- ACTS THIS WAY! AND ITS SUPERCONDUCTIVITY WOULD DRAIN MY ENERGIES! BUT AT ROOM TEMPERATURE-- INCREDIBLE!
THIS MAGNETIC FIELD WILL REPEL A SUPERCONDUCTOR-- IF IT DOESN'T... FRY ME FIRST!
YOU'RE ALL RIGHT, MASTER! YOU BEAT IT!
INDEED. AND MASTERFULLY DONE! BUT IT WON'T BE SO EASY NEXT TIME!
WHO--SHOW YOURSELF, COWARD! THE PRINCE COMMANDS!
I HAVE NO SELF--I AM BUT THE EMANATION OF SYCORAX, THE POWER IN THE CITY OF DIS--BUT I GATHER YOUR MEANING.
EAT MESONS, DEMON!
I'M AFRAID NOT. I THANK YOU, THOUGH, FOR ROUSING ME FROM MY SLEEP OF AGES BY YOUR ACTIVITIES--
--AS WELL AS FOR THE AMUSEMENT YOU WILL GIVE ME...
...BEFORE YOU DIE!
ANOTHER EGOTIST THIS PLACE HAS A PLAGUE OF THEM!

BUT HE ALMOST KILLED YOU, MASTER-
BAH NOT EVEN CLOSE. BUT NOW WE MUST SEE TO VALARIA.
THE FRUIT WAS A RUSE THIS IS A COMA THE LIKE OF WHICH I'VE NEVER SEEN.
CAN YOU SAVE HER, MASTER?
SINCE THE ALTERNATIVE IS BEING ALONE WITH YOU, I'LL GIVE IT A TRY
VERY CURIOUS: THERE IS METABOLIC ACTIVITY, BUT NOT THE USUAL KIND. AND THOUGH THE SKIN HAS WITHERED, IT'S NOT IN DEATH: IT HAS HARDENED AS WELL. COULD THIS BE ILLNESS OR SOMETHING ELSE?
DO WHATEVER YOU NEED TO, MASTER--SYMAX IS ON GUARD!
I WONDER-- COULD THE SORCERESS BE MORE INSECT-LIKE THAN I THOUGHT? COULD THIS BE--?
MASTER! SOMETHING'S HAPPENING!
I CAN SEE, MONKEY
THE OLD SKIN BREAKS OPEN --THE OLD BODY FALLS AWAY!
BUT AFTER THE MOLTING COMES-- WHAT?
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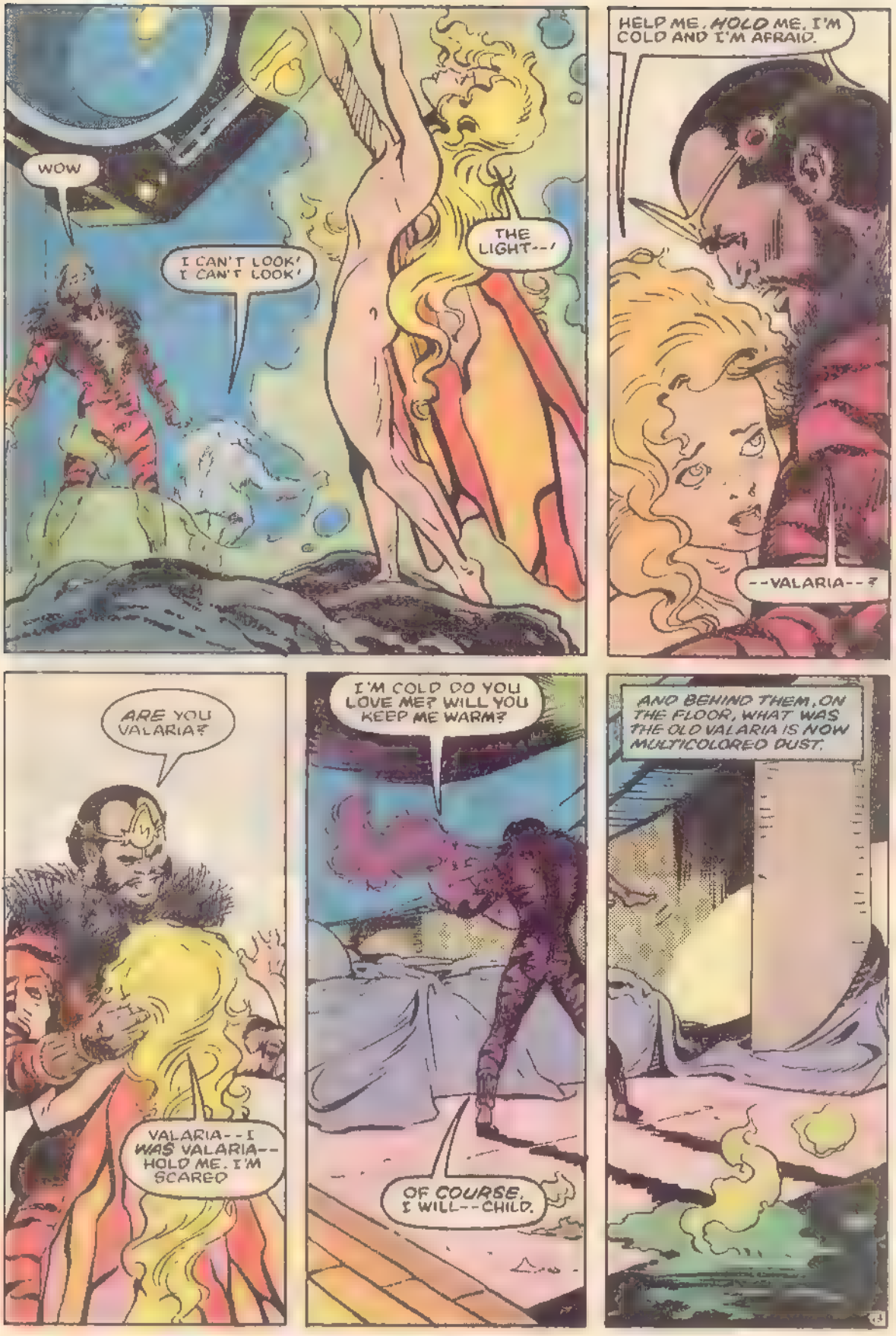
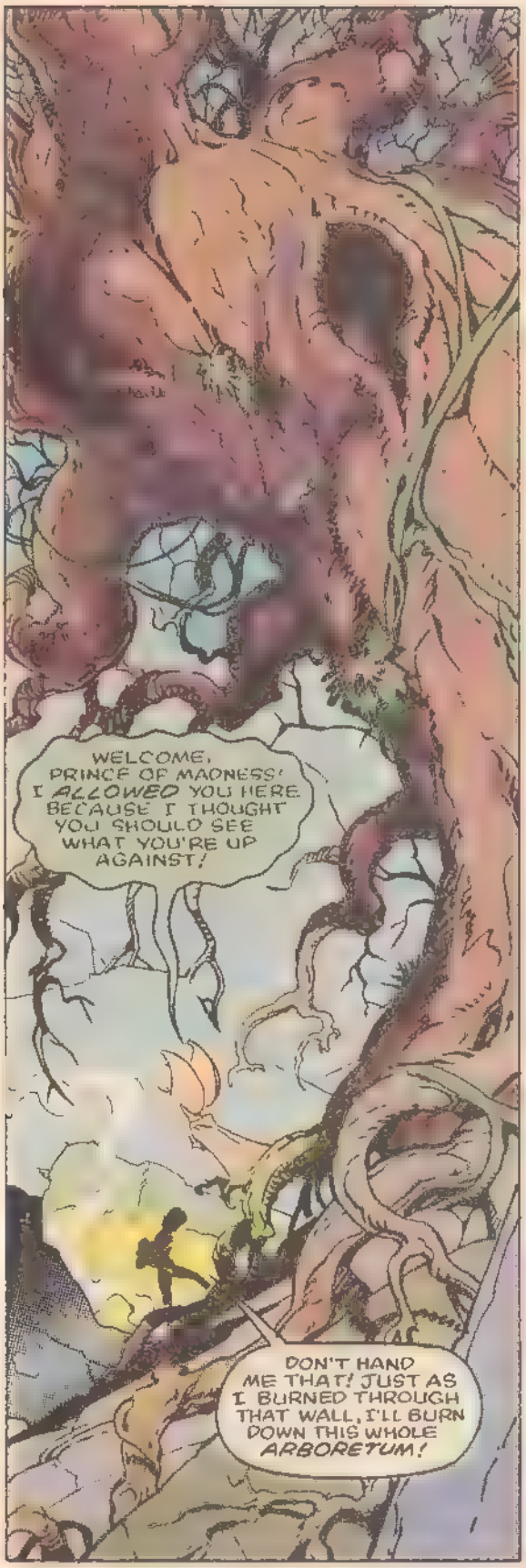
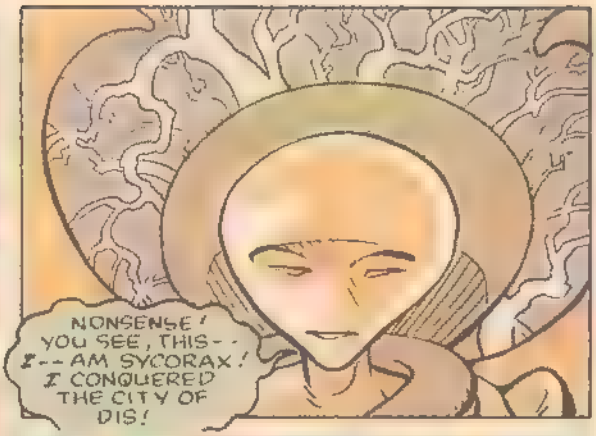
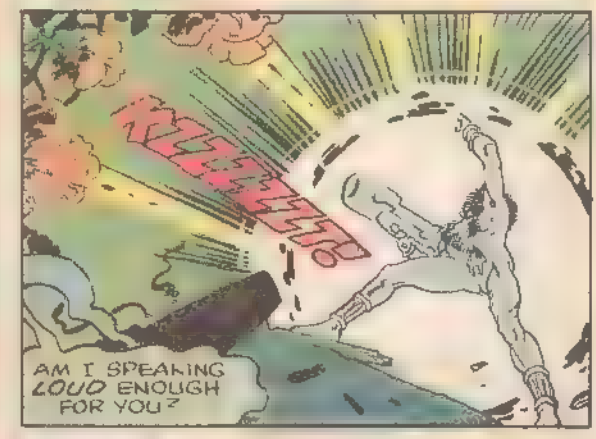
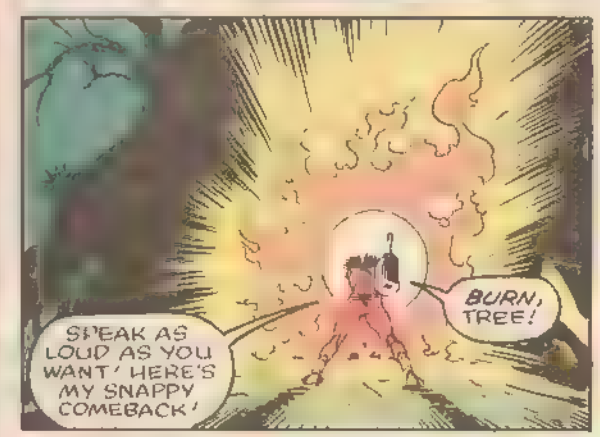

WOW
I CAN'T LOOK! I CAN'T LOOK!
THE LIGHT--!
HELP ME. HOLD ME. I'M COLD AND I'M AFRAID.
--VALARIA--?
ARE YOU VALARIA?
VALARIA--I WAS VALARIA--HOLD ME. I'M SCARED
I'M COLD DO YOU LOVE ME? WILL YOU KEEP ME WARM?
OF COURSE, I WILL--CHILD.
AND BEHIND THEM, ON THE FLOOR, WHAT WAS THE OLD VALARIA IS NOW MULTICOLORED DUST.

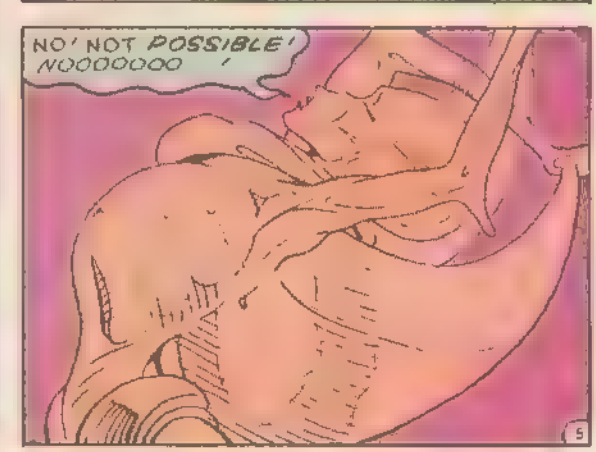
IN THE DAYS THAT FOLLOW, SYMAX MONITORS THE SEARCH
YOU SAVED ME, MY PRINCE. I SHALL ALWAYS LOVE YOU. SAY YOU LOVE ME.
SURE. ALWAYS WILL
NOW I REMEMBER WHY I STAY AWAY FROM THE YOUNG ONES.
ANYTHING YET, SYMAX?
THE DRONES REPORT NOTHING--
MASTER!!
WITHIN MINUTES, CHAOS IS IN THE LOWER CAVERNS, ARMED AS FEW OTHERS
HEY, I THINK WE'VE FOUND IT, SYMAX.
COME, MY MEGALOMANIAC FRIEND, DON'T KEEP ME--
WAITING?
MISSED EVEN MY SHIELDS! POWERFUL--BUT WASTEFUL!
I'VE MADE THE AWESOME SYMAX NERVOUS! ERGO, I'M VERY NEAR MY GOAL!


WELCOME, PRINCE OF MADNESS! I *ALLOWED* YOU HERE BECAUSE I THOUGHT YOU SHOULD SEE WHAT YOU'RE UP AGAINST!
DON'T HAND ME THAT! JUST AS I BURNED THROUGH THAT WALL, I'LL BURN DOWN THIS WHOLE *ARBORETUM!*

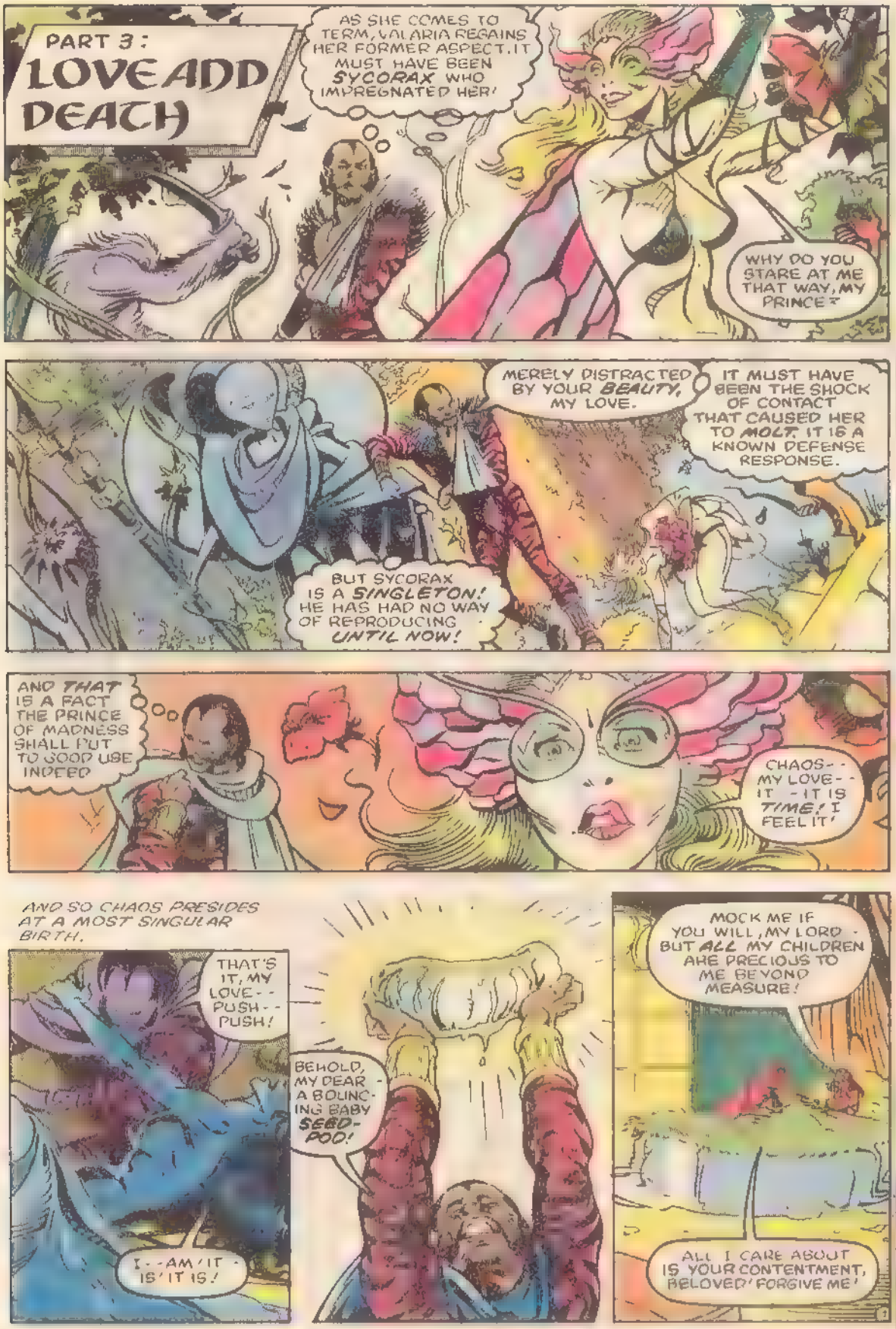

NONSENSE! YOU SEE, THIS-- I-- AM SYCORAX! I CONQUERED THE CITY OF DIS!


KZZZZZZB
AM I SPEAKING *LOUD* ENOUGH FOR YOU?

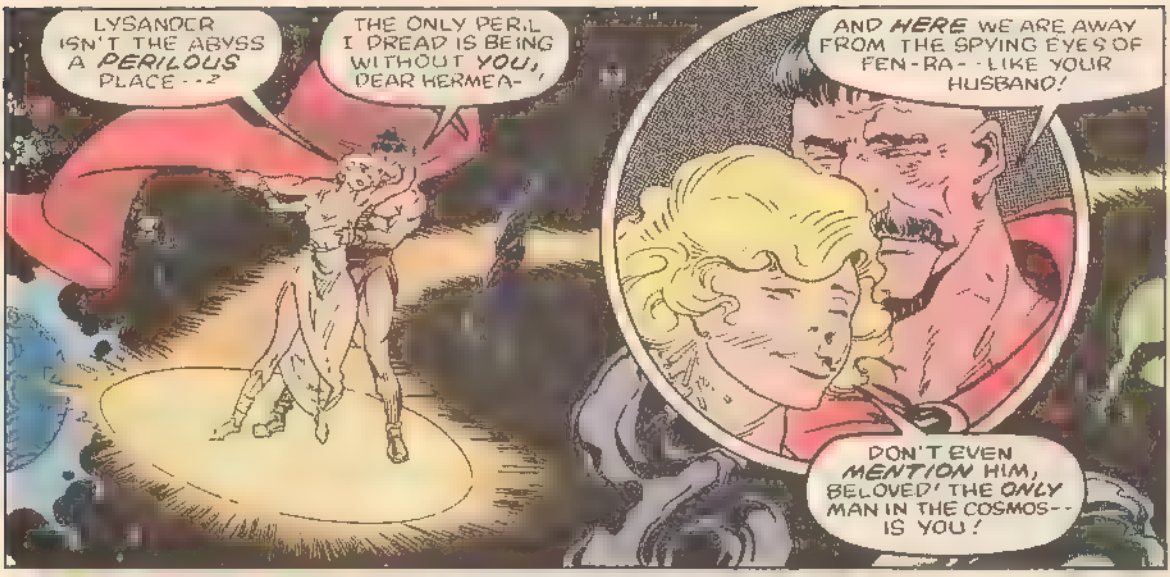

BURN, TREE!
SPEAK AS LOUD AS YOU WANT! HERE'S MY SNAPPY COMEBACK!


NO! NOT *POSSIBLE!* NOOOOOOO!

IT IS YOU WHO WILL BURN, CHAOS! NONE MAY CAUSE SYCORAX PAIN!
MY SHIELDS-- CAN TAKE ANYTHING-- EGOTIST!
YOU ARE A DEAD MAN, CHAOS! A DEAD MAN!
LATER...
I HURT THE BUFFOON, SYMAX-- AND HE COULDN'T KILL ME--!
BUT HE'S FAR TOO POWERFUL FOR ANOTHER FRONTAL ASSAULT! I MUST THINK OF SOMETHING--!
I MUST TELL YOU, MY LOVE, MY PRINCE NEW LIFE STIRS WITHIN ME! I AM PREGNANT!
DIDN'T YOU HAVE PROTECTION, MASTER?
SHUT UP, SYMAX THIS WILL WORK INTO MY PLANS QUITE NICELY
AND NOT VERY LONG AFTER THAT, WHILE THE SLEEP-STAR SHINES OVER FEN-RA--
A ZONE OF FLIGHT ARCS FROM THE CITY- CARRYING HERMEA-
--IN THE ARMS OF THE MAN SHE DID NOT MARRY-- LYSANDER!
IT IS A FLIGHT THAT NONE SEE-- SAVE A CONCERNED LUGULBANDA
16

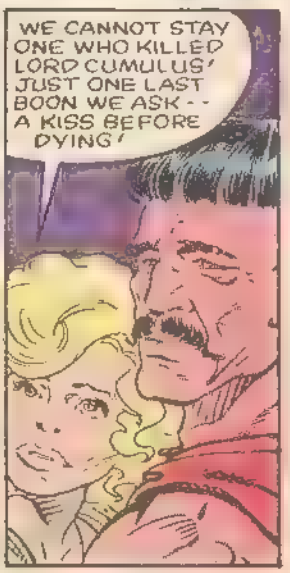

PART 3:
LOVE AND DEATH
AS SHE COMES TO TERM, VALARIA REGAINS HER FORMER ASPECT. IT MUST HAVE BEEN SYCORAX WHO IMPREGNATED HER!
WHY DO YOU STARE AT ME THAT WAY, MY PRINCE?
MERELY DISTRACTED BY YOUR BEAUTY, MY LOVE.
IT MUST HAVE BEEN THE SHOCK OF CONTACT THAT CAUSED HER TO MOLT. IT IS A KNOWN DEFENSE RESPONSE.
BUT SYCORAX IS A SINGLETON! HE HAS HAD NO WAY OF REPRODUCING UNTIL NOW!
AND THAT IS A FACT THE PRINCE OF MADNESS SHALL PUT TO GOOD USE INDEED
CHAOS-- MY LOVE-- IT -IT IS TIME! I FEEL IT!
AND SO CHAOS PRESIDES AT A MOST SINGULAR BIRTH.
THAT'S IT, MY LOVE-- PUSH-- PUSH!
I--AM/IT IS/IT IS!
BEHOLD, MY DEAR - A BOUNCING BABY SEED-POD!
MOCK ME IF YOU WILL, MY LORD - BUT ALL MY CHILDREN ARE PRECIOUS TO ME BEYOND MEASURE!
ALL I CARE ABOUT IS YOUR CONTENTMENT, BELOVED! FORGIVE ME!

AND I KNOW YOU WILL BE PLEASED TO HEAR THAT I HAVE DISCOVERED A WAY TO VANQUISH SYCORAX!
YOU HAVE PROVIDED THE KEY!
WHAT DO YOU MEAN, CHAOS?
A PLAN- AND ALL IT REQUIRES IS THE LOAN OF YOU POO FOR A WHILE--
NEVER! GET AWAY FROM ME!
OUCH! HER POWERS HAVE RETURNED AS WELL!
NO ONE SHALL HARM--OR TOUCH--MY BABY! BY KUTHALU, THIS SPELL SHALL SEE TO IT!
IT SHALL NEVER BE A PAWN IN YOUR PERILOUS GAME, CHAOS!
MASTER--!
BUTT OUT, SYMAX! WE'RE HAVING A DISCUSSION!
BUT, MASTER-- MONITORS SHOW TWO FIGURES ON A ZONE OF FLIGHT APPROACHING!
TRESPASSERS--- AND FROM FEN RA! LET'S GO, APE!


LYSANDER ISN'T THE ABYSS A PERILOUS PLACE--?
THE ONLY PERIL I DREAD IS BEING WITHOUT YOU, DEAR HERMEA-!
AND HERE WE ARE AWAY FROM THE SPYING EYES OF FEN-RA--LIKE YOUR HUSBAND!
DON'T EVEN MENTION HIM, BELOVED! THE ONLY MAN IN THE COSMOS--IS YOU!

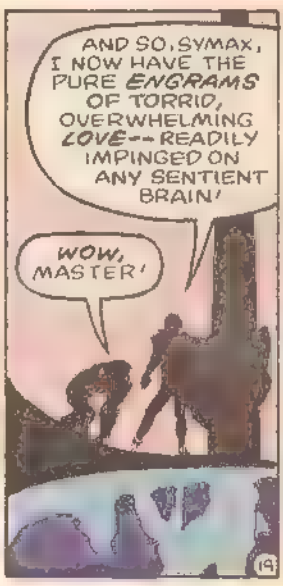
ONLY A FEN-RANIAN COULD POUR THE SYRUP ON LIKE THAT!
BUT TWO LOVERS--IT GIVES ME A WONDERFUL IDEA!

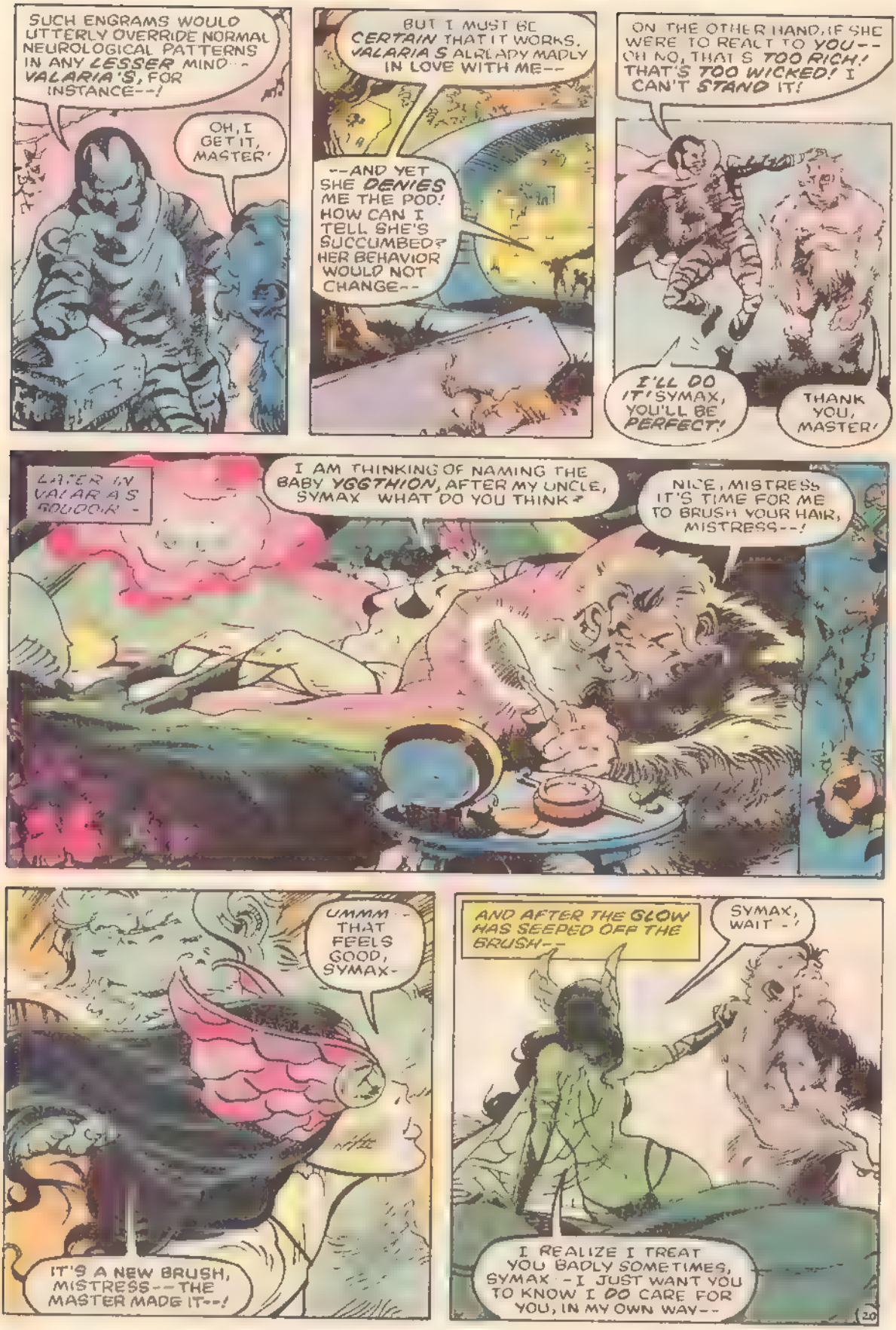
INTRUDERS! YOU HAVE VIOLATED THE PERSONAL SPACE OF CHAOS, PRINCE OF MADNESS!
YOU SHALL DIE--NOW!

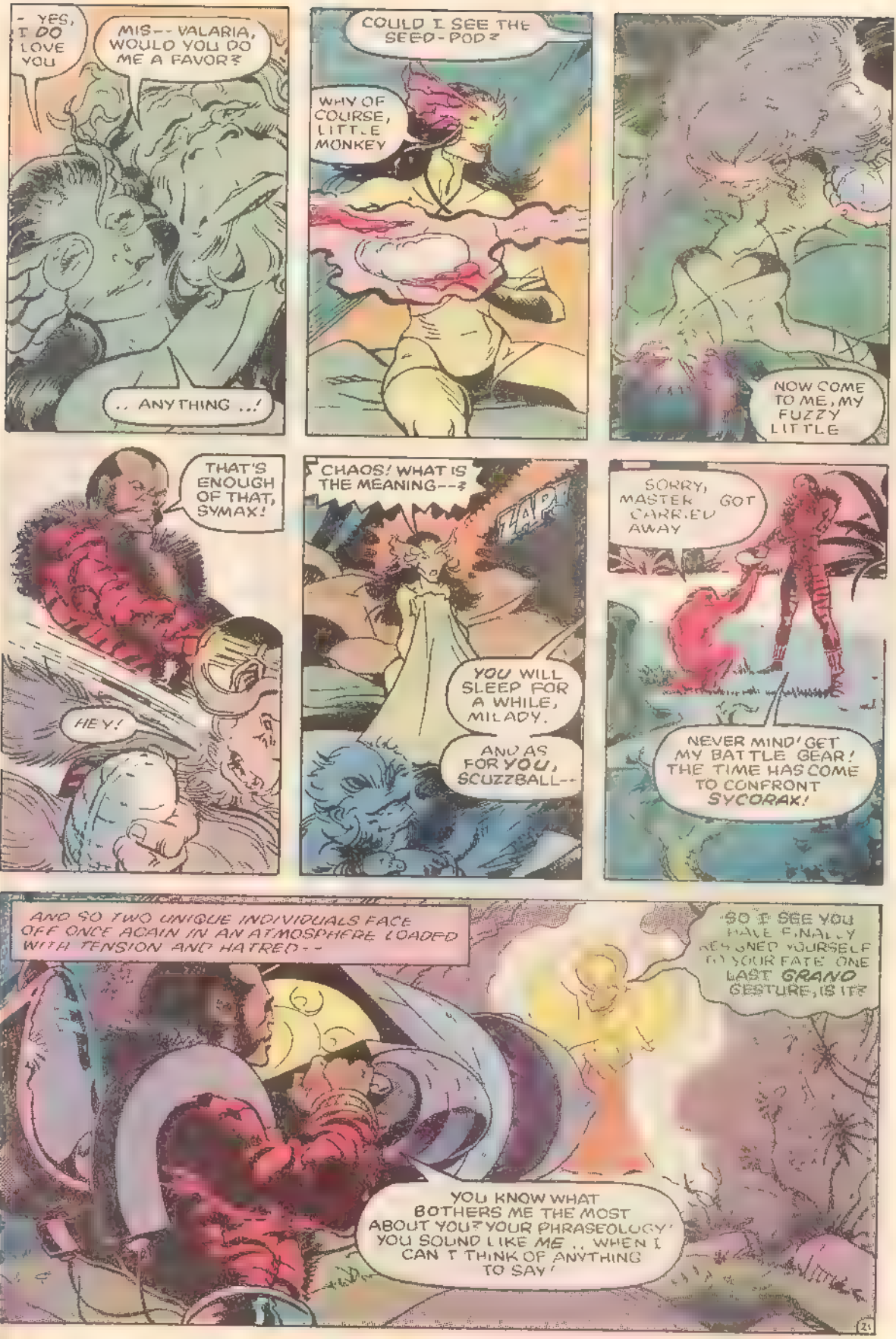

WE CANNOT STAY ONE WHO KILLED LORD CUMULUS! JUST ONE LAST BOON WE ASK--A KISS BEFORE DYING!

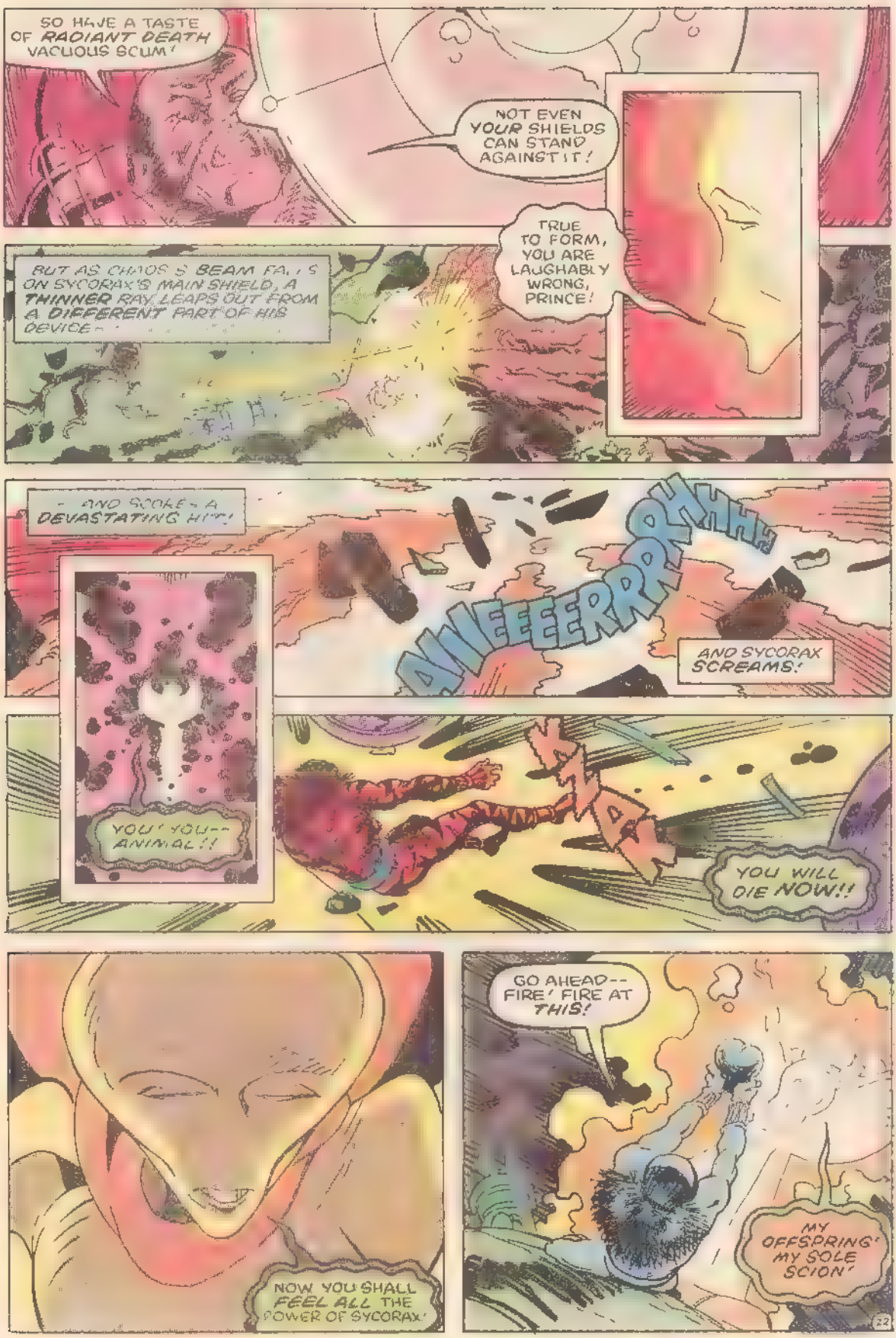
I WOULD HAVE INSISTED UPON IT, MY DEAR!

AND, AS THE COUPLE EMBRACE, THEY ARE LOCKED IN AN ENERGY MATRIX, FREEZING THAT MOMENT OF PASSION!
--AND AS THEIR BODIES ARE LEACHED OF LIFE, THAT PASSION IS PRESERVED--AND EXTRACTED!


AND SO, SYMAX, I NOW HAVE THE PURE ENGRAMS OF TORRID, OVERWHELMING LOVE--READILY IMPINGED ON ANY SENTIENT BRAIN!
WOW, MASTER!
19


SUCH ENGRAMS WOULD UTTERLY OVERRIDE NORMAL NEUROLOGICAL PATTERNS IN ANY LESSER MIND -- VALARIA'S, FOR INSTANCE--!
OH, I GET IT, MASTER!
BUT I MUST BE CERTAIN THAT IT WORKS. VALARIA S ALREADY MADLY IN LOVE WITH ME--
--AND YET SHE DENIES ME THE POD! HOW CAN I TELL SHE'S SUCCUMBED? HER BEHAVIOR WOULD NOT CHANGE--
ON THE OTHER HAND, IF SHE WERE TO REACT TO YOU-- OH NO, THAT S TOO RICH! THAT'S TOO WICKED! I CAN'T STAND IT!
I'LL DO IT, SYMAX, YOU'LL BE PERFECT!
THANK YOU, MASTER!
LATER IN VALARIA S BOUDOIR -
I AM THINKING OF NAMING THE BABY YGGTHION, AFTER MY UNCLE, SYMAX WHAT DO YOU THINK?
NICE, MISTRESS IT'S TIME FOR ME TO BRUSH YOUR HAIR, MISTRESS--!
UMMM - THAT FEELS GOOD, SYMAX-
IT'S A NEW BRUSH, MISTRESS -- THE MASTER MADE IT--!
AND AFTER THE GLOW HAS SEEPED OFF THE BRUSH--
SYMAX, WAIT -!
I REALIZE I TREAT YOU BADLY SOMETIMES, SYMAX - I JUST WANT YOU TO KNOW I DO CARE FOR YOU, IN MY OWN WAY--


- YES, I DO LOVE YOU
MIS-- VALARIA, WOULD YOU DO ME A FAVOR?
.. ANYTHING ..!
COULD I SEE THE SEED-POD?
WHY OF COURSE, LITTLE MONKEY
NOW COME TO ME, MY FUZZY LITTLE
THAT'S ENOUGH OF THAT, SYMAX!
HEY!
CHAOS! WHAT IS THE MEANING--?
YOU WILL SLEEP FOR A WHILE, MILADY.
AND AS FOR YOU, SCUZZBALL--
SORRY, MASTER GOT CARRIED AWAY
NEVER MIND! GET MY BATTLE GEAR! THE TIME HAS COME TO CONFRONT SYCORAX!
AND SO TWO UNIQUE INDIVIDUALS FACE OFF ONCE AGAIN IN AN ATMOSPHERE LOADED WITH TENSION AND HATRED--
SO I SEE YOU HAVE FINALLY RESIGNED YOURSELF TO YOUR FATE ONE LAST GRAND GESTURE, IS IT?
YOU KNOW WHAT BOTHERS ME THE MOST ABOUT YOU? YOUR PHRASEOLOGY! YOU SOUND LIKE ME .. WHEN I CAN'T THINK OF ANYTHING TO SAY!


SO HAVE A TASTE OF RADIANT DEATH VACUOUS SCUM!
NOT EVEN YOUR SHIELDS CAN STAND AGAINST IT!
TRUE TO FORM, YOU ARE LAUGHABLY WRONG, PRINCE!
BUT AS CHAOS'S BEAM FALLS ON SYCORAX'S MAIN SHIELD, A THINNER RAY LEAPS OUT FROM A DIFFERENT PART OF HIS DEVICE--
--AND SCORES A DEVASTATING HIT!
AYIEEEERRRRHHHH!
AND SYCORAX SCREAMS!
YOU! YOU--ANIMAL!!
KRAK
YOU WILL DIE NOW!!
NOW YOU SHALL FEEL ALL THE POWER OF SYCORAX!
GO AHEAD--FIRE! FIRE AT THIS!
MY OFFSPRING! MY SOLE SCION!

AND FROM CHAOS'S BELT, YET ANOTHER ENERGY PROJECTOR LASHES OUT--
--AND SYCORAX, ITS SHIELD DROPPED FOR ALL-OUT ATTACK, IS PENETRATED--
--AND SUBDUED.
I AM YOURS, O MASTER.
AND NOW YOU SOUND LIKE SYMAX. YOU'LL PROVE FAR MORE USEFUL HOWEVER..
PART 4:
VENGEANCE AND VICTORY
THE MANY TENDRILS OF SYCORAX ARE STILL NOW, AS CHAOS'S SERVOS ATTACH CONTROL MODULES TO ITS HUGE MAIN TRUNK NEXT, THERE MUST BE TESTS--
--IF THERE IS TIME!
KWHOOM
MASTER! WE'RE UNDER ATTACK!
WE HAVE TRACED THE ENERGIES THAT MURDERED HERMEA AND LYSANDER TO THESE RUINS! THE ENEMY LIES WITHIN!
THEN THE ASSEMBLED NOBLES OF FEN-RA SHALL LEVEL THIS TRASH-HEAP!

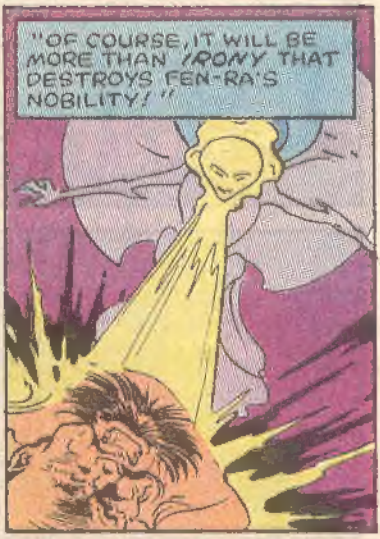
OF ALL THE TIMES TO SHOW UP! I'M NOT READY FOR THESE JERKS YET--!
CHAOS!
I AWOKE TO FIND MY BABY GONE! DELIVER HIM, OR FACE TORMENTS UNDREAMED-OF!
HOW DARE YOU SPEAK TO YOUR LORD LIKE THAT!
SYCORAX ENSORCELLED YOU AND STOLE YOUR CHILD WHILE YOU SLEPT - AND I BRAVED HELL TO RETURN HIM TO YOU! HERE!
MY PRINCE, FORGIVE ME--I HAVE WRONGED YOU--!
YOU ARE FORGIVEN, WOMAN. BUT NOW WE MUST STEEL OURSELVES--FOR THE WORST IS COME!
MISTRESS SARGON -WE HAVE MIND ATTUNEMENT.
THEN AT MY SIGNAL--WE FIRE!
AND FROM A THOUSAND ZONES OF FLIGHT--FROM A THOUSAND FEN-RANIAN MINDS--FIRE AND FORCE LEAP OUT IN ANGER!

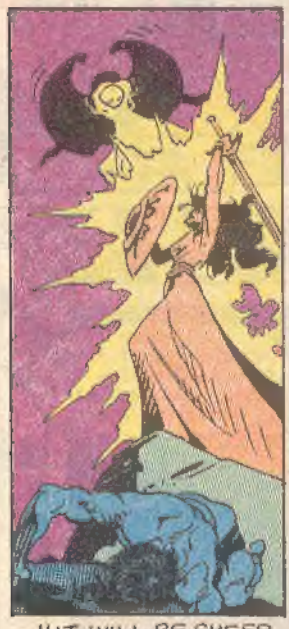
THIS PLACE IS AS LARGE AS ALL FEN-RA! THE ENEMY COULD BE ANYWHERE!
WE'LL HAVE TO FAN OUT, THEN--
NO! COME WITH ME!
I AM KALIBAN, SON OF SYCORAX, AND I WILL SHOW YOU JUST WHERE THE ENEMY LIES.
THIS MAY BE A TRAP, MISTRESS
OF COURSE IT'S A TRAP! BUT NO TRAP'S JAWS CAN CLOSE ON A FORCE SUCH AS OURS!
YOU LOOK FAMILIAR, MY RAGGED FRIEND--!
OH, NO! WHAT COULD GODS SUCH AS YOU HAVE TO DO WITH SUCH AS KALIBAN--?
--EXCEPT BE DUPED BY HIM? SUCKERS!
25

AND IN THE GREAT CHAMBER THERE ARE ONLY TWO PALE FIGURES: ONE OF FLESH, ONE OF SHIMMERING ENERGY.
WELCOME, DEAR SISTER SARGON.
I HALF-EXPECTED YOU, VALARIA--BUT I DIDN'T EXPECT MY VENGEANCE WOULD BE SO EASILY FULFILLED!
THEN YOUR HALF-EXPECTATIONS ARE BETTER THAN YOUR WHOLE ONES--
--AS CHAOS CHANNELS THE POWERS OF DIS'S MACHINES THROUGH THE NEUROSYSTEM OF SYCORAX, COMBINING THEIR ONCE-OPPOSED ENERGIES!
--BECAUSE IT IS YOUR DOOM THAT STANDS HERE!
THE DEMON-IMAGES MULTIPLY--
AND THE RESULT IS CARNAGE!
FOR FEN-RA! FOR LYSANDER!
26

WHATEVER YOU ARE--DIE!

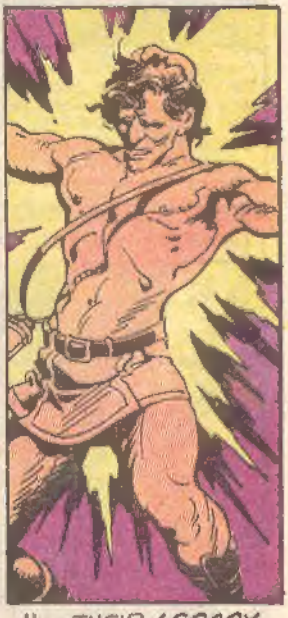
DIE? THEY'RE LONG DEAD, SARGON--AND THEIR IMAGES ARE POWERED BY THAT WHICH KILLED THEM!

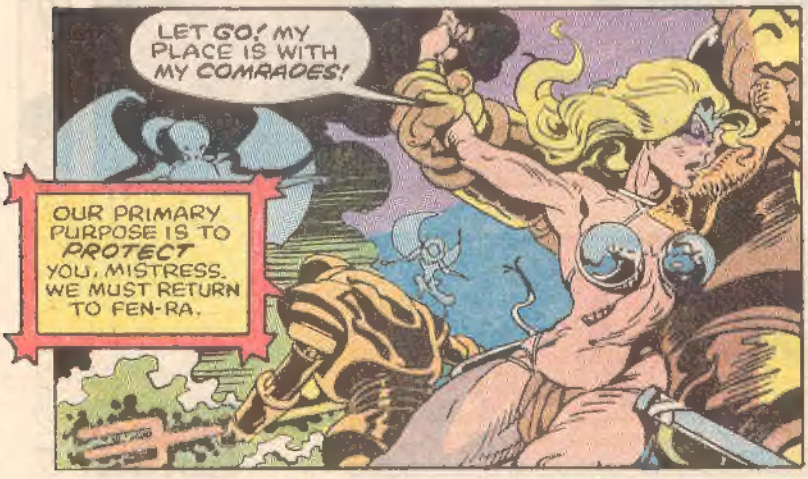

"OF COURSE, IT WILL BE MORE THAN IRONY THAT DESTROYS FEN-RA'S NOBILITY!"


"IT WILL BE SHEER POWER--"

"--AUGMENTED BY UTTER GENIUS!"

"AND EVEN AS THE DEMONS OF DIS ONCE LAID FEN-RA LOW--"

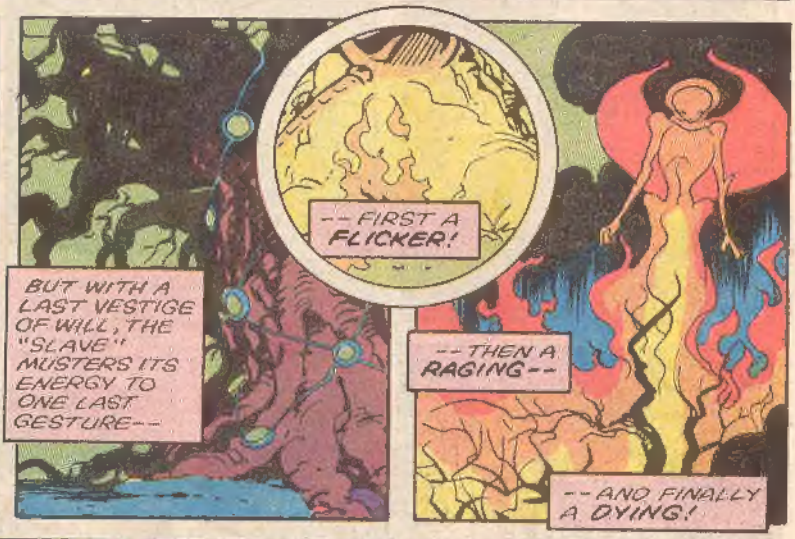

"--THEIR LEGACY SHALL DO THE SAME!"

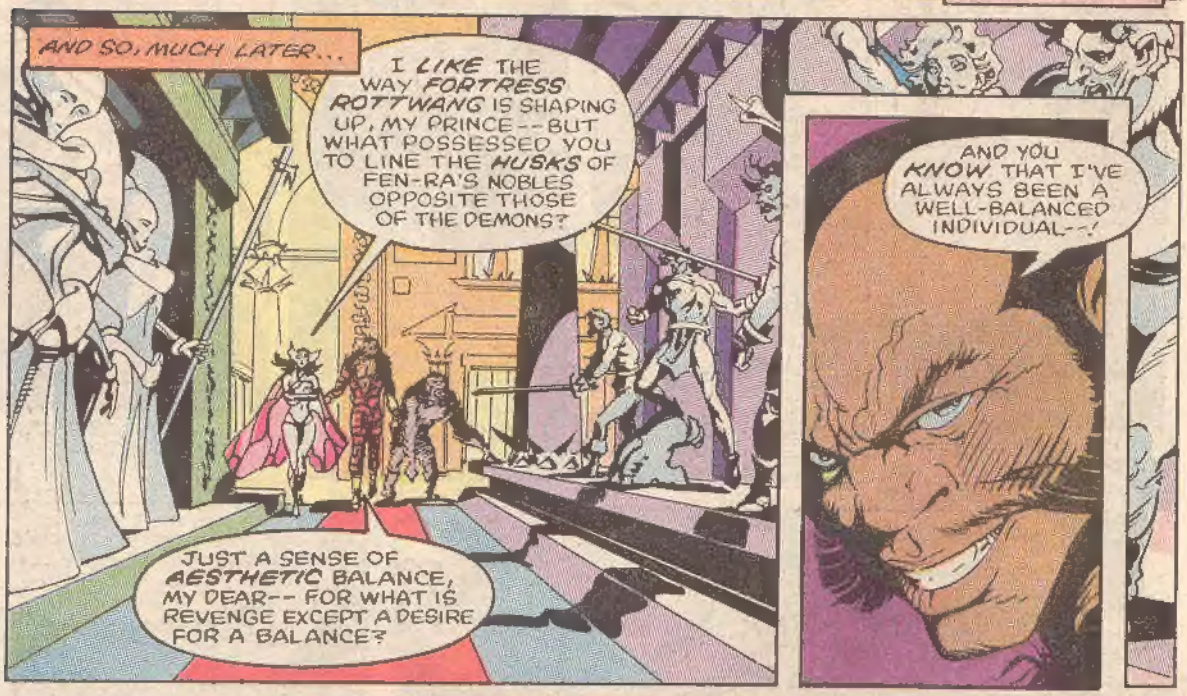

LET GO! MY PLACE IS WITH MY COMRADES!
OUR PRIMARY PURPOSE IS TO PROTECT YOU, MISTRESS. WE MUST RETURN TO FEN-RA.

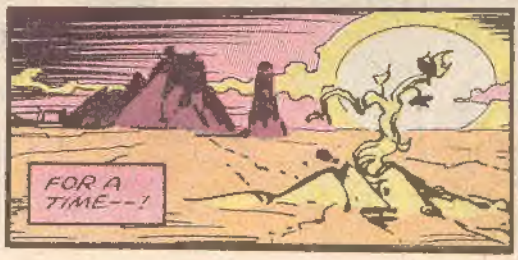
PITY. I'D HAVE ENJOYED SEEING SARGON'S EXPRESSION--WHEN THE END COMES.

THE BATTLE CONTINUES TO RAGE--THEN FLICKERS AND DIES.
IN THE END, SYCORAX'S ENERGIES, AS THEY DID TO THE DEMON'S OF DIS LONG AGO, HAVE TURNED THE NOBLES OF FEN-RA INTO DEAD STATUES--SHELLS WITHOUT LIFE.

WELL! NOT A BAD DAY'S WORK! AND WHEN MY SLAVE IS RESTED, WE SHALL EFFECT THE DESTRUCTION OF FEN-RA ITSELF!


BUT WITH A LAST VESTIGE OF WILL, THE "SLAVE" MUSTERS ITS ENERGY TO ONE LAST GESTURE--
--FIRST A FLICKER!
--THEN A RAGING--
--AND FINALLY A DYING!


AND SO, MUCH LATER...
I LIKE THE WAY FORTRESS ROTTWANG IS SHAPING UP, MY PRINCE--BUT WHAT POSSESSED YOU TO LINE THE HUSKS OF FEN-RA'S NOBLES OPPOSITE THOSE OF THE DEMONS?
JUST A SENSE OF AESTHETIC BALANCE, MY DEAR-- FOR WHAT IS REVENGE EXCEPT A DESIRE FOR A BALANCE?
AND YOU KNOW THAT I'VE ALWAYS BEEN A WELL-BALANCED INDIVIDUAL--!


AND THE CITY OF DIS GIVES ITSELF TO A NEW MASTER--
FOR A TIME--!

THE END

FIRST NOTES

STILL ANOTHER LETTER COLUMN?

We've been getting a great deal of mail that either covers our entire line or is in response to issues raised here in First Notes. I thank you for all the feedback — it is tremendously important, and I've been meaning to run some of it in this column. Which, oddly enough, is just what I'm doing now.

Dear Mike:

You hit the nail on the head. Too many parents are quick to blame "outside influences" for their own inadequacies in raising their children. And as a parent, I resent others who try to dictate what my kids can see, read or do.

As to video games ... well, my son introduced me to the fun of playing against the computer and I have introduced him to the fun of reading and collecting comics. Our hobbies have overlapped and brought us closer together.

I have been collecting comics since the Sixties, Mike, and this is the first time I can remember reading a real editorial on a comic's editorial page. You are to be commended.

Phil White
Lake Forest, CA

Dear Mike,

Who is Notary Sojac? Why don't you intend for your comics to be sold to mynas? Do you actually think someone would take a copy of Mars #2 and machine wash it? Why is Jon Sable, Freelance sanitized for our protection? Admittedly, American Flagg! was an all-American comic in its debut, but why were all thoughts I had while reading the first issue of E-Man copyrighted? And who wants a dolphin-skin coat, anyway?

What goes with the business box in the lower left corner of your inside front covers? Is there really going to be a short quiz later?

Brad Keefauver
Morton, IL

The indicia gags are the work of Associate Editor (and **Warp***-editor) Rick Oliver, who appears to be overreacting to his completely normal childhood.*

And, for the record, "notary sojac" was the running non-sequitur in Bill Holman's wonderful Sunday comic strip, Smokey Stover. If you haven't seen the strip, check it out in the Smithsonian Book of Newspaper Comic Strips.

Dear Mike,

I think First Comics is the best thing to happen to the comics industry since Action Comics #1. Since the appearance of First Comics and Pacific Comics, the overall quality of all comics companies has improved.

Michael A. Amarello
Fall River, Ma

Dear Mike:

I think you're on to something here. I hold in my hands, as it were, the First Comics line. I like your books very much — quite an improvement over comics in general.

However, I must caution you. Remember the mid-70s and a comics

group known as Atlas/Seaboard? They, too, had marvelous artists and writers, exciting stories and art, as well as a general grasp of what comics readers wanted. They folded.

I would not like to see this happen to First. After American Flagg!, take time to rest ... let the comics establish themselves ... get a following, and then hit us again with another batch. I feel First is going to go a long way ... we're ready, but will you be?

Charles B. Cockett, Jr.
Cheyenne, WY

Atlas/Seaboard was, in my opinion, a classic example of the right idea at the wrong time. Had they gone into business five years later when the direct sales distribution network was on stronger ground, and had they been able to avoid newsstand distribution, I firmly believe they'd be around today.

Still, I have to point out that no single Atlas title went beyond four issues ... and each of our books have gone well beyond that. We did take a rest after **Mars** *(instead of Flagg), introducing only our initial graphic novel, Beowulf, in the six months following* **Mars** *#1. But our next new monthly will come out in early April, and we've got two more books set for summer release.*

Please, keep your letters coming — both to this column and to our individual titles. We'll run another First Notes letterpol before too long.

— Mike Gold

FIRST IN FEBRUARY

American Flagg #9: "In Town To Do Some Business ... With a Big Iron on his Hip!", the conclusion to State of the Union. **Chaykin's** got Flagg up a pole, and just wait 'till you see who salutes!

E-Man #18: The return of Samuel Boar! The shooting of Michael Mauser! The menace of The Battery! **Joe Staton's** made sure E-Man's getting a hot welcome in Chicago town tonight!

Jon Sable, Freelance #13: "MIA — Conclusion." **Mike Grell's** got Jon Sable and crew inside Vietnam — now, can he get them out in one piece?

Mars #6: Who really runs the red planet? If you haven't checked out this ground-breaking monthly yet, "Faith" is the place to start! Plus: the wind-up to the first Black Flame epic!

Starslayer #17: Torin's got to bust out of jail, and Grimjack's hip-deep in killer bunnies! Have **John Ostrander** and **Timothy Truman** lost their minds, or just their inhibitions?

Warp Special #3 featuring Chaos — Prince of Madness: "Four Figures on a Darkened Stage," the sequel to the critically acclaimed *first* **Warp Special.** Story by **Peter Gillis,** art by **George Freeman.**